

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SSC-01 IO-14 EB-11 SIL-01 LAB-06 DRC-01 /124 W

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R 290335Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8581

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WELLINGTON 2726

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, NZ

SUBJECT: MINOR CABINET CHANGES FOLLOW PM KIRK'S HOSPITALIZATION

REF WELLINGTON 2709

1. AFTER PM KIRK'S HOSPITALIZATION YESTERDAY (REFTEL) FOLLOWING CABINET CHANGES WERE MADE:

ARTHUR FAULKNER, MINISTER OF DEFENSE, PICKED UP WORKS AND DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO FROM DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WATT.

FRASER COLMAN, MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, HAS BEEN GIVEN TOURISM AND PUBLICITY PORTFOLIO ALSO PREVIOUSLY HELD BY WATT.

WATT HAS BEEN NAMED ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

2. REARRANGING OF PORTFOLIOS WAS TO BE EXPECTED AS WATT WILL HAVE HIS HANDS FULL FILLING IN FOR KIRK. DROPPING OF WORKS RATHER THAN LABOR PORTFOLIO IS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE HOWEVER. WATT HAS A KEEN INTEREST IN WORKS AND DEVELOPMENT AND HAS GENERALLY HAD MORE SUCCESS WITH IT THAN WITH HIS LABOR JOB.

ALSO SURPRISING IS WATT'S TAKING OVER AS ACTING MINISTER OF
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FOREIGN AFFAIRS. IN KIRK'S ABSENCE JOB SHOULD HAVE GONE TO

JOSPEPH WALDING, ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WATT TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE HE EXPECTED WALDING TO HANDLE MOST DAY-TO-DAY FOREIGN AFFAIRS MATTERS BUT THAT HE MIGHT HAVE TO STEP IN ON OCCASION TO ACT AS THE MINISTER.

3. GENERAL EXPECTATION IS THAT FAULKNER WILL DO A GOOD JOB AS MINISTER OF WORKS. HE IS AN INTELLIGENT, HARD-WORKING INDIVIDUAL AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE THIS IMPORTANT MINISTRY AS A STEPPING STONE TO GREATER RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LABOUR PARTY.
SELDEN

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